**St. Joseph’s College, Borrisoleigh**

**Transition Year Policy**

**Introduction**

The Transition Year (TY) programme provides students with a unique educational opportunity to explore their personal, social, and academic development. This policy is designed to promote holistic growth, foster critical thinking, and prepare students for senior cycle education and life beyond school including different career opportunities.

**Rationale**

The TY programme bridges the gap between the Junior and Senior Cycles, emphasising experiential and collaborative learning. It aims to:

* Cultivate transferable skills and independent learning habits.
* Enhance personal development and self-confidence.
* Provide opportunities for exploring potential career paths.
* Encourage active citizenship and social responsibility.

**Core Principles**

The TY programme in our school is underpinned by the following principles:

* **Inclusivity:** Every student is encouraged to participate and thrive, irrespective of ability or background.
* **Flexibility:** The curriculum offers diverse modules to cater to varied student interests decided upon on a yearly basis.
* **Engagement:** Active student involvement in planning and activities.
* **Innovation:** Opportunities for creativity and new learning experiences.

**Programme Structure**

The TY programme is divided into the following components:

1. **Core Curriculum**
   * English, Mathematics, Irish (where applicable).
   * Physical Education and Wellbeing.
   * Personal Development and Reflection, including SPHE and guidance.
2. **Modules and Electives**
   * Rotational modules in areas such as Science, Technology, Arts, French and Business.
   * School-specific electives based on student interests and teacher expertise.
3. **Work Experience**
   * A minimum of two, two weeks of structured work experience.
   * Pre- and post-placement reflective activities.
   * Encouraged to avail of specific college / university placements throughout the year both n person and online. This includes FET TY Tasters run by Tipperary ETB
4. **Projects and Competitions**
   * Participation in local, national, and international initiatives (e.g., BT Young Scientist, Gaisce Award, Junk Kouture, debating, F1 in schools, GAA Future Leaders).
5. **Trips and Workshops**
   * Educational trips, outdoor pursuits, and guest speakers to enhance experiential learning.
6. **Community Engagement**
   * Volunteer work and initiatives to foster social responsibility.

**Assessment and Reporting**

Assessment in TY is formative and focuses on personal growth rather than summative grades. Methods include:

* Continuous teacher feedback.
* Student self-assessments and reflective journals.
* Portfolios showcasing learning and achievements.
* End-of-year reports and a TY certification.

**Roles and Responsibilities**

* **TY Coordinator:** Oversees the programme, liaises with management, staff, students, and external agencies.
* **Management:** Oversees the programme and coordinator, designs timetable and scheduling of modules and activities. Informs TY coordinator of teacher strengths for use in the programme.
* **Teachers:** Deliver engaging modules, mentor students, and support individual development. Volunteer to help with the TY Core team.
* **Students:** Take ownership of their learning, participate actively, and uphold school values.
* **Parents/Guardians:** Support their child’s participation and provide feedback.

**Programme Evaluation**

Regular evaluation ensures the programme remains relevant and effective:

* Annual student and parent feedback surveys.
* Teacher reflections and collaborative planning.
* Analysis of outcomes and alignment with TY goals.

**Policy Review**

This policy will be reviewed every three years or in response to changes in the national TY specification.

**TRANSITION YEAR ENROLMENT POLICY**

**ST. JOSEPH’S COLLEGE, BORRISOLEIGH**

This enrolment policy has been formulated in accordance with the provisions of relevant legislation in order to assist parents and guardians of applicants for the Transition Year Programme in relation to enrolment matters.

The Transition Year Programme is an optional one-year programme available to students who have completed the Junior Certificate Examination. The number of places on the Transition Year Programme will be determined each year by the Board of Management following consultation with the principal within the context of the overall enrolment to the school and the resources available within the school.

The school aims to

* Provide a fair and transparent system of enrolment for students to the Transition Year Programme
* Make reasonable provision and accommodation for students, including students with disability and special educational needs in accordance with relevant legislation, with due regard to the efficient use of resources provided by the Department of Education and Science
* Allow for full participation by all students, subject to resources being available and allowing for Health and Safety implications

The parents/guardians of 3rd year pupils will be invited to attend an information session in April and the procedures for applying for places on the programme will be outlined. Pupils will be required to return a completed application form, signed by the student and a parent/guardian, by the specified date. Following the return of the completed application form a student may be interviewed by the Transition Year Core Team (usually made up of the TY Coordinator, the Principal other TY core teachers) to decide whether a place on the Transition Year Programme will be offered to him/her. This interview will be used to ascertain an applicant’s suitability to the Transition Year Programme. Applications will be accepted up to the deadline printed on the form. Applications received after that date may not be considered. Consideration will also be given to the input of teachers regarding individual students. The final decision on whether a place should be made available to a pupil will be based on the recommendations of the interviewing committee.

Continuation in the Transition Year Programme is dependent on students maintaining appropriate behaviour, maturity, and active engagement in the curriculum and extracurricular activities. As outlined in the school’s enrolment policy, parents/guardians are aware of the school’s Code of Behaviour, which sets clear expectations for student conduct. If a student demonstrates persistent behavioural issues, immaturity, or fails to fully participate in the activities and learning experiences of the programme, their place in Transition Year may be reviewed. In such cases, a meeting will be arranged with the principal, the Transition Year coordinator, and/or members of the Transition Year core team to assess the situation. Following this meeting, it may be determined that the student needs to move to 5th year to ensure their continued academic and personal development.

Equality of access is a key factor in determining the enrolment of any child on the Transition Year Programme. No child will be refused admission for reasons of ethnicity, special educational needs, disability, language, gender, traveller status, refugee status, asylum-seeker status, religious or political beliefs and values, family or social circumstances.

The school management must also respect the rights of the school community. This requires balanced judgements which are guided by the principles of natural justice and acting in the best interests of all children and staff. Assisting the school in such circumstances, the school management, reserves the right to determine the maximum number of enrolments for the Transition Year Programme.

The school management reserves the right to refuse a place on the Transition Year programme to any applicant on the following grounds:

* That no suitable accommodation/place exists within the year group
* That an offer of a place at the time may have a negative effect on pupils already enrolled
* That the applicant is already registered in another post-primary school and has been excluded from his/her school for disciplinary reasons

Each application will be considered on its own merits.

St. Joseph’s College welcomes applications for the Transition Year Programme from children with special educational needs and is committed to providing a broad, balanced and relevant curriculum to enable students to reach their full potential. It is important that all relevant information and reports pertaining to a child’s special educational needs are supplied to the school to enable the school to apply to the Department of Education and Science for the required resources to assist the school in meeting the child’s educational needs. St. Joseph’s College is committed to educating pupils with learning difficulties alongside their peers within the normal curriculum of the mainstream year group, giving due consideration to the appropriate wishes of the child’s parents and the necessity to meet the individual needs of the child.

St. Joseph’s College welcomes applications for the Transition Year Programme from children from other second level schools. Information may be sought from the student’s former school concerning attendance, educational progress, term reports, disabilities and special needs, reasons for transfer as per Section 20 of the Education Welfare Act. Information will be sought in relation to the student’s disciplinary record. The applicant must meet with the Principal in the presence of a parent/guardian to discuss the application.

This policy is subject to change and will be reviewed annually in line with evolving legislation and practice, including the Education Acts, the Equal Status Act and all related statutory and regulatory requirements.

**Approval**

This TY policy was approved by the Board of Management November 2024.

**Signed:** Chairperson

**Date: 11/11/2024**